Fruits and vegetables alone do not appear to prevent cancer; tobacco, obesity, and alcohol remain among top risks.

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Fruits and vegetables are key sources of nutrients, and they are essential for a healthy diet. These foods alone, however, do not appear to be sufficient to prevent cancer, according to an analysis conducted at Oxford University. Researchers reviewed the results of studies addressing the relationship of fruit and vegetable intake with colorectal, breast, prostate, and lung cancer, as well as cancers of the upper gastrointestinal (GI) tract. Overall, only cancers of the upper GI tract showed a small decrease in risk associated with increased fruit and vegetable consumption. Factors that could have impacted the results of the studies examined in this analysis include tobacco and alcohol use.

The authors emphasize that this study indicates that although fruits and vegetables are important, the best way to prevent cancer remains limiting alcohol intake, maintaining a normal weight, and refraining from tobacco use.

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